by DOUG MOENCH and TOM MANDRAKE
75¢
397
JULY 86
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
BAT MAN
MANDRAKE
THE TRIUMPH OF TWO-FACE!

POLICE HEADQUARTERS:
SPECIAL DELIVERY, DUDES.
BATMAN
THIS HERE IS THE "CANDYMAN" WHO'S BEEN PUSHIN' DOPE AT NORTH GOTHAM JUNIOR HIGH.
GOOD LORD, ROBIN...!
IT GETS WORSE, GORDON -- BECAUSE TWO-FACE IS BACK IN GOTHAM.
G-2516
BINARY BRAINS

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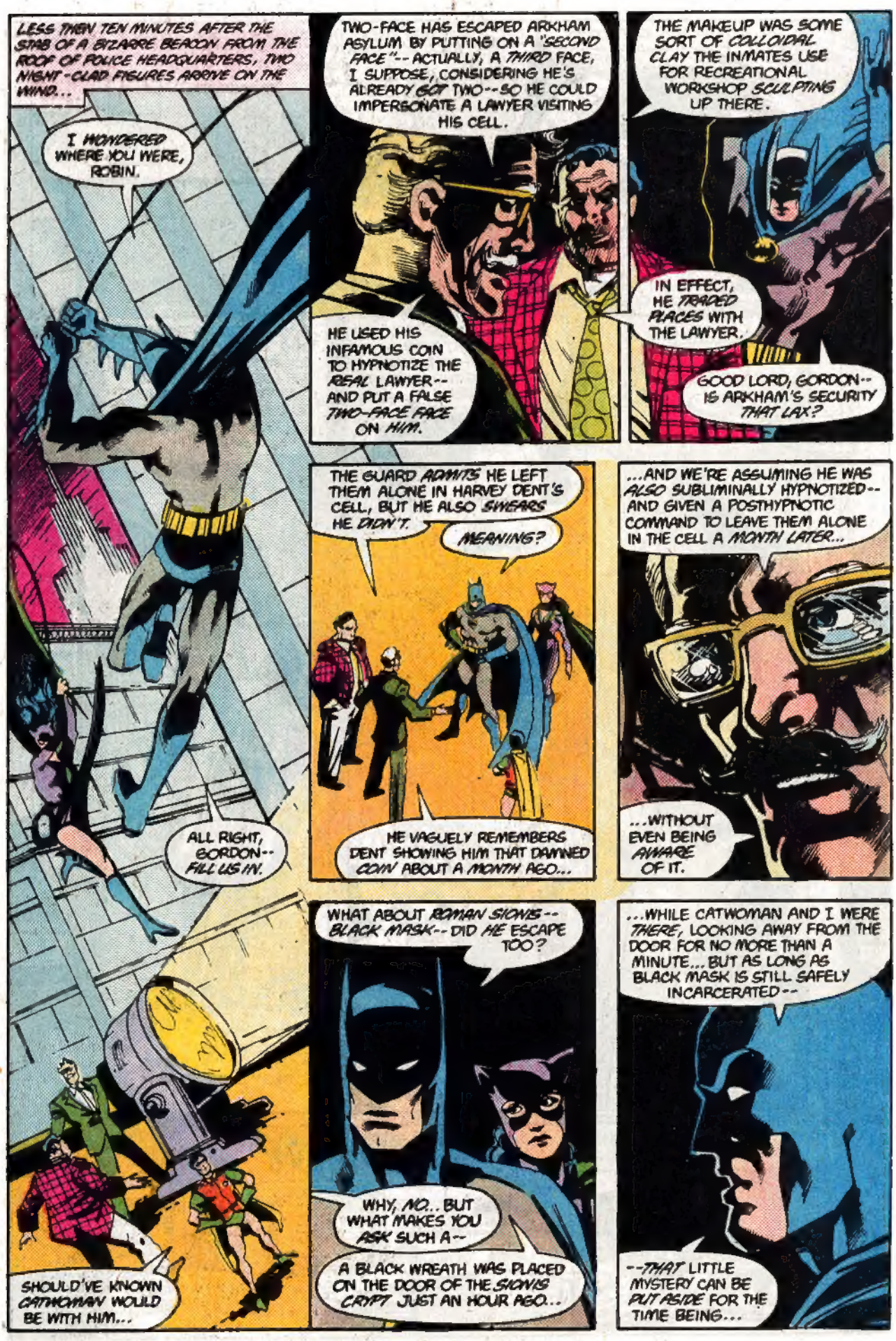
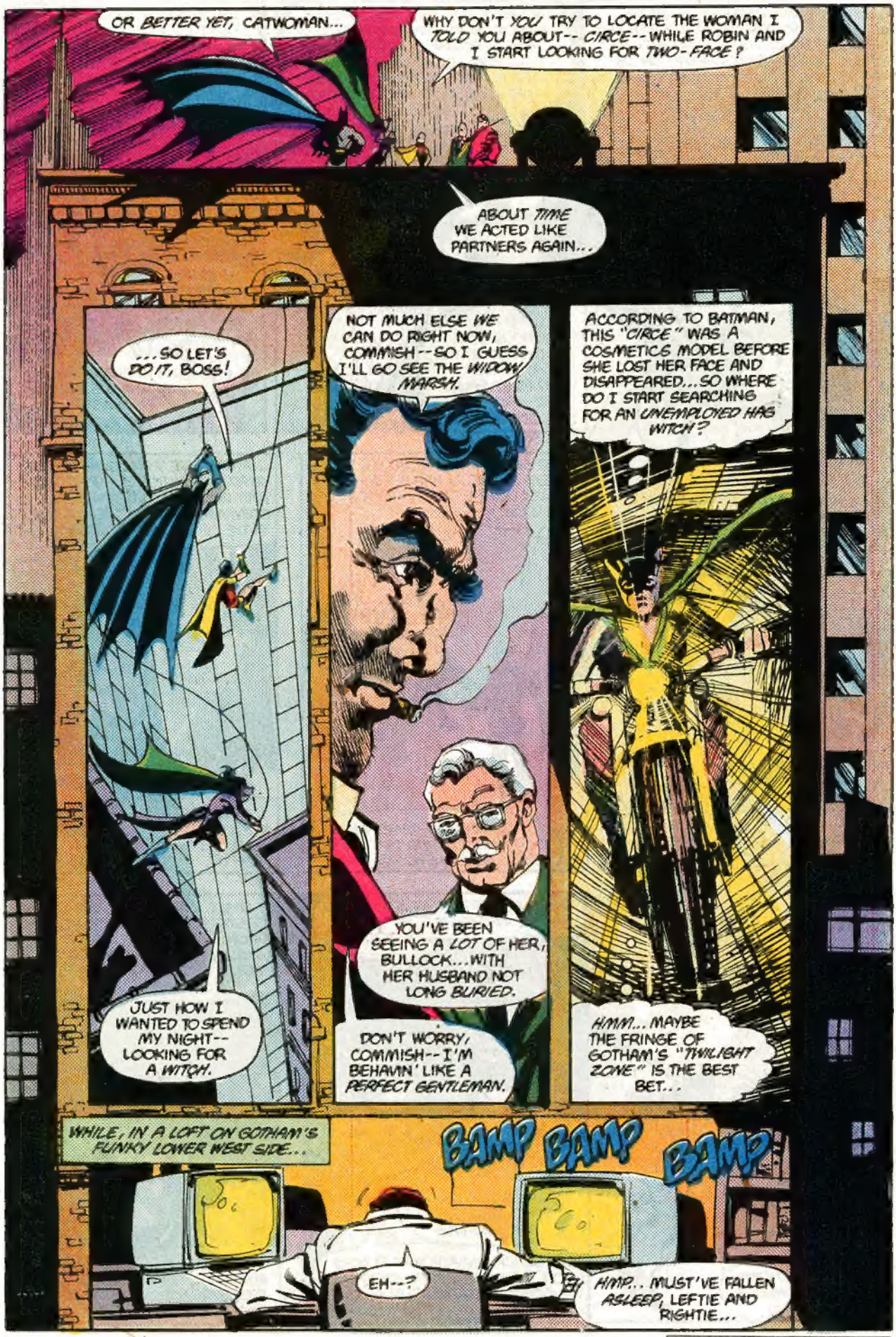
Brent-NW

IN FACT, IT WAS TWO-FACE WHO ACTUALLY SQUASHED THE CANDYMAN -- BEFORE I GOT THE CHANCE.
BRINNG
ARE YOU SURE IT WAS TWO-FACE?
POSITIVE. HOW COULD I MISTAKE A SCHIZO MUG LIKE HIS?
ARE YA SURE?
YEAH, RIGHT-- HOLD ON -- YOU CAN GIVE HIM THE DETAILS YOURSELF.
IT'S ARKHAM, COMMISH -- AN' THE KID'S RIGHT.
THEN GET UP TO THE ROOF, BULLOCK, AND --
GOTCHA, COMMISH -- TURN ON THE BAT-SIGNAL.
ME AN' THE KID ARE ON OUR WAY.
THIS IS COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON -- WHAT THE DEVIL HAPPENED UP THERE?
WHILE, ON A STREET CORNER JUST OFF CRIME ALLEY...
THAT TWO-BIT PUSHER WAS A PUSHOVER FOR A GOOD HAUL, BOYS --
-- AND WITH THE CANDYMAN'S CASH EVENLY DISTRIBUTED IN MY POCKETS, WE'RE FAIRLY FLUSH.
IN FACT, WE'RE STAKED TO ONE HELL OF A CRIME RUN.
WHERE AND WHEN, TWO-FACE?
RIGHT NOW, BOYS --
-- AT THE HOME OF A CERTAIN COMPUTER GENIUS WHO WAS THE SUBJECT OF A MAGAZINE ARTICLE I READ UP IN ARKHAM...


LESS THEN TEN MINUTES AFTER THE STAB OF A BIZARRE BEACON FROM THE ROOF OF POLICE HEADQUARTERS, TWO NIGHT-CLAD FIGURES ARRIVE ON THE WIND...
I WONDERED WHERE YOU WERE, ROBIN.
ALL RIGHT, GORDON-- FILL US IN.
TWO-FACE HAS ESCAPED ARKHAM ASYLUM BY PUTTING ON A "SECOND FACE"-- ACTUALLY, A THIRD FACE, I SUPPOSE, CONSIDERING HE'S ALREADY GOT TWO-- SO HE COULD IMPERSONATE A LAWYER VISITING HIS CELL.
HE USED HIS INFAMOUS COIN TO HYPNOTIZE THE REAL LAWYER-- AND PUT A FALSE TWO-FACE FACE ON HIM.
THE MAKEUP WAS SOME SORT OF COLLOIDAL CLAY THE INMATES USE FOR RECREATIONAL WORKSHOP SCULPTING UP THERE.
IN EFFECT, HE TRADED PLACES WITH THE LAWYER.
GOOD LORD, GORDON-- IS ARKHAM'S SECURITY THAT LAX?
THE GUARD ADMITS HE LEFT THEM ALONE IN HARVEY DENT'S CELL, BUT HE ALSO SWEARS HE DIDN'T.
MEANING?
HE VAGUELY REMEMBERS DENT SHOWING HIM THAT DAMNED COIN ABOUT A MONTH AGO...
...AND WE'RE ASSUMING HE WAS ALSO SUBLIMINALLY HYPNOTIZED-- AND GIVEN A POSTHYPNOTIC COMMAND TO LEAVE THEM ALONE IN THE CELL A MONTH LATER...
...WITHOUT EVEN BEING AWARE OF IT.
SHOULD'VE KNOWN CATWOMAN WOULD BE WITH HIM...
WHAT ABOUT ROMAN SIONIS-- BLACK MASK-- DID HE ESCAPE TOO?
WHY, NO.. BUT WHAT MAKES YOU ASK SUCH A--
A BLACK WREATH WAS PLACED ON THE DOOR OF THE SIONIS CRYPT JUST AN HOUR AGO...
...WHILE CATWOMAN AND I WERE THERE, LOOKING AWAY FROM THE DOOR FOR NO MORE THAN A MINUTE... BUT AS LONG AS BLACK MASK IS STILL SAFELY INCARCERATED--
--THAT LITTLE MYSTERY CAN BE PUT ASIDE FOR THE TIME BEING...


OR BETTER YET, CATWOMAN...
WHY DON'T YOU TRY TO LOCATE THE WOMAN I TOLD YOU ABOUT-- CIRCE-- WHILE ROBIN AND I START LOOKING FOR TWO-FACE?
ABOUT TIME WE ACTED LIKE PARTNERS AGAIN...
...SO LET'S DO IT, BOSS!
NOT MUCH ELSE WE CAN DO RIGHT NOW, COMMISH--SO I GUESS I'LL GO SEE THE WIDOW MARSH.
ACCORDING TO BATMAN, THIS "CIRCE" WAS A COSMETICS MODEL BEFORE SHE LOST HER FACE AND DISAPPEARED...SO WHERE DO I START SEARCHING FOR AN UNEMPLOYED HAG WITCH?
JUST HOW I WANTED TO SPEND MY NIGHT-- LOOKING FOR A WITCH.
YOU'VE BEEN SEEING A LOT OF HER, BULLOCK...WITH HER HUSBAND NOT LONG BURIED.
DON'T WORRY, COMMISH--I'M BEHAVIN' LIKE A PERFECT GENTLEMAN.
HMM...MAYBE THE FRINGE OF GOTHAM'S "TWILIGHT ZONE" IS THE BEST BET...
WHILE, IN A LOFT ON GOTHAM'S FUNKY LOWER WEST SIDE...
BAMP BAMP BAMP
EH--?
HMP... MUST'VE FALLEN ASLEEP, LEFTIE AND RIGHTIE...

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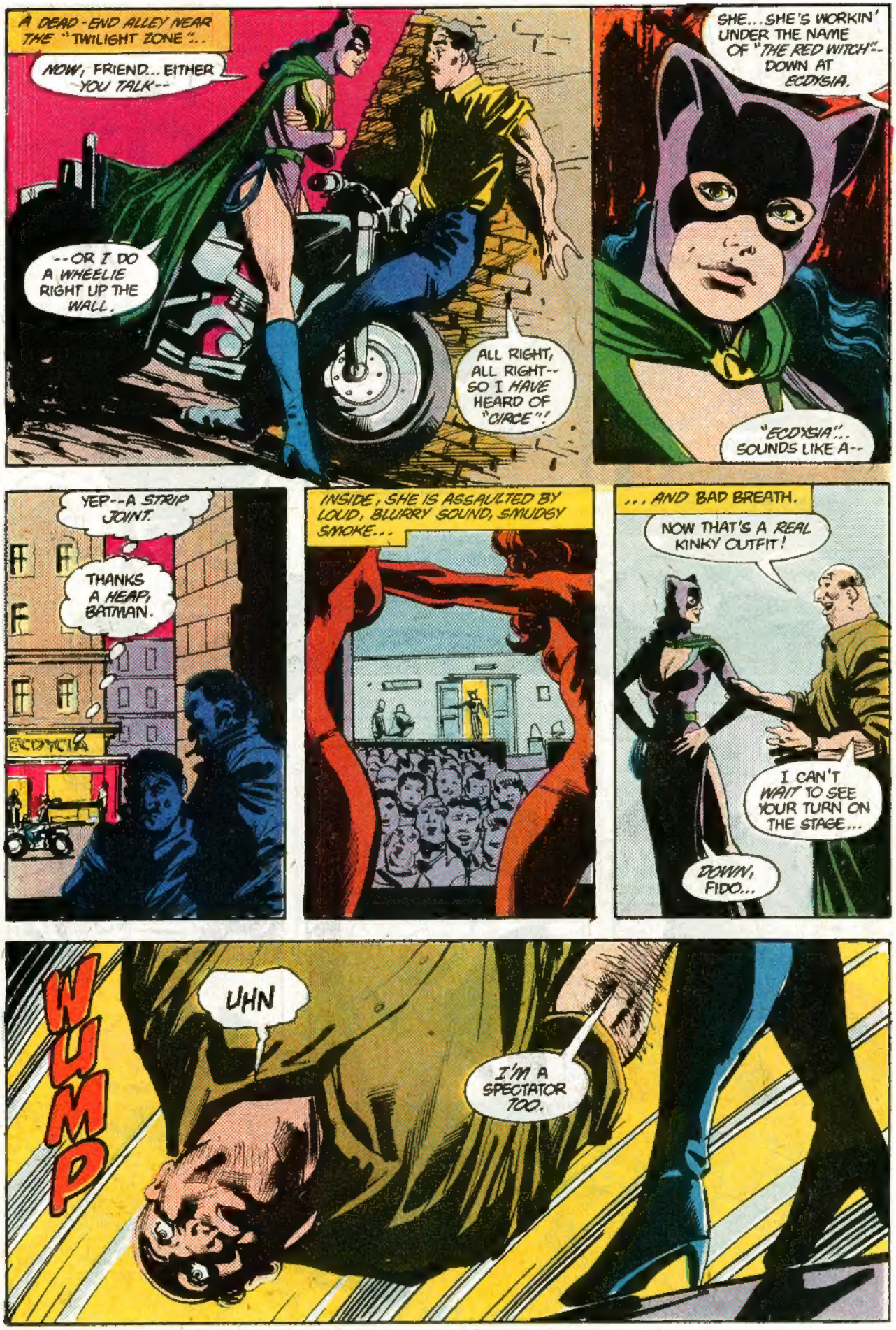
...BUT THAT CERTAINLY DOESN'T EXPLAIN WHO'S POUNDING THE DOOR AT THIS TIME OF NIGHT, EMPIRICALLY OR OTHERWISE...
BAM BAM BAM
HOLD YOUR HORSES-- I'M COMING!
HOLY CRIPES!
WH-WHO ARE YOU--?!
THINK OF ME AS A WEIRD JEKYLL AND HYDE IN SPLIT-SCREEN, GENIUS--
--WHOSE PERSONALITY IS DETERMINED NOT BY DRINKING SOME CHEMICAL BREW, BUT BY THE TOSS OF A COIN.
C-C-COIN? WHAT COIN?
HA HA HA HA HA
THAT WAS FUNNY, HUH?
UM... WH-WHAT IS IT YOU WANT--?
AND THE LAUGHTER DIES.
I UNDERSTAND YOU HAVE TWO VERY SPECIAL COMPUTERS OF YOUR OWN MAKING -- TWINS WHICH NEVERTHELESS CONTRADICT EACH OTHER.
WHY, Y-Y-YES... B-BUT--
GOOD. THEY ARE WHAT I WANT...
...AND THIS TWO-HEADED COIN WILL DECIDE WHETHER I STEAL OR BUY.
B-BUT THEY'RE NOT FOR SALE!
PLIP
THEY'RE TOO UNIQUE! I... I'M STILL TESTING THEM!

THE UNMARKED SIDE -- THREE TIMES IN A ROW NOW...
YOU'RE LUCKY, GENIUS -- THAT MEANS BUY.
NO! I TELL YOU I WON'T SELL!
BRAM
THIS IS A DOUBLE-BARRELED SHOTGUN, GENIUS.
ONE SIDE CAN FIRE HIGH..
... AND THE OTHER SIDE CAN FIRE LOW...
...IN WHICH CASE, YOUR ENTIRE FACE WOULD RESEMBLE MY LEFT PROFILE.
I THINK I G-GET THE PICTURE.
S-S-SOLD.
SMART MAN, GENIUS.
:GLMPH:
:UMPHGLG:
AND KEEP THE CHANGE.


A DEAD-END ALLEY NEAR THE "TWILIGHT ZONE"...
NOW, FRIEND... EITHER YOU TALK--
--OR I DO A WHEELIE RIGHT UP THE WALL.
ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT-- SO I HAVE HEARD OF "CIRCE"!
SHE... SHE'S WORKIN' UNDER THE NAME OF "THE RED WITCH"-- DOWN AT ECDYSIA.
"ECDYSIA"... SOUNDS LIKE A--
YEP--A STRIP JOINT.
THANKS A HEAP, BATMAN.
ECDYCIA
INSIDE, SHE IS ASSAULTED BY LOUD, BLURRY SOUND, SMUDGY SMOKE...
...AND BAD BREATH.
NOW THAT'S A REAL KINKY OUTFIT!
I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE YOUR TURN ON THE STAGE...
DOWN, FIDO...
WUMP
UHN
I'M A SPECTATOR TOO.

AND NOW, GENTS--
--LET'S HAVE A BIG HAND FOR THE RED WITCH!
IT'S ONLY RAUCOUS ROCK, BENATAR'S "HIT ME WITH YOUR BEST SHOT"--
--BUT THE MUSIC SEEMS TO SMELL SOMEHOW, NOW EDGED WITH DARKNESS.
A THRILL OF DANGER FILLS THE PLACE...
... AND EVEN HERE, WHERE NEARLY EVERYTHING HAS BEEN SEEN AND SEEN AGAIN...
... THERE IS SUDDENLY A SENSE OF THE FORBIDDEN.
...WHY IS SHE DOING THIS?
WHY?
IF IT'S REALLY HER...
... AND WITH HER HISTORY..
THE DANGER DEEPENS.
PERHAPS IT'S THE COWL'S SHADOW...
...OR THE CALCULATION OF HER STRANGE SLOW SWAY TO THE QUARTER-BEAT...
WHATEVER, IT DEEPENS, BUILDS, AND THEN...
SHE FINISHES--IN LITTLE MORE THAN A MASK OF FROZEN BEAUTY...
... NEVER SHOWING HER TRUE FACE.
AND THEY LOVE IT.
IT... NOT HER.

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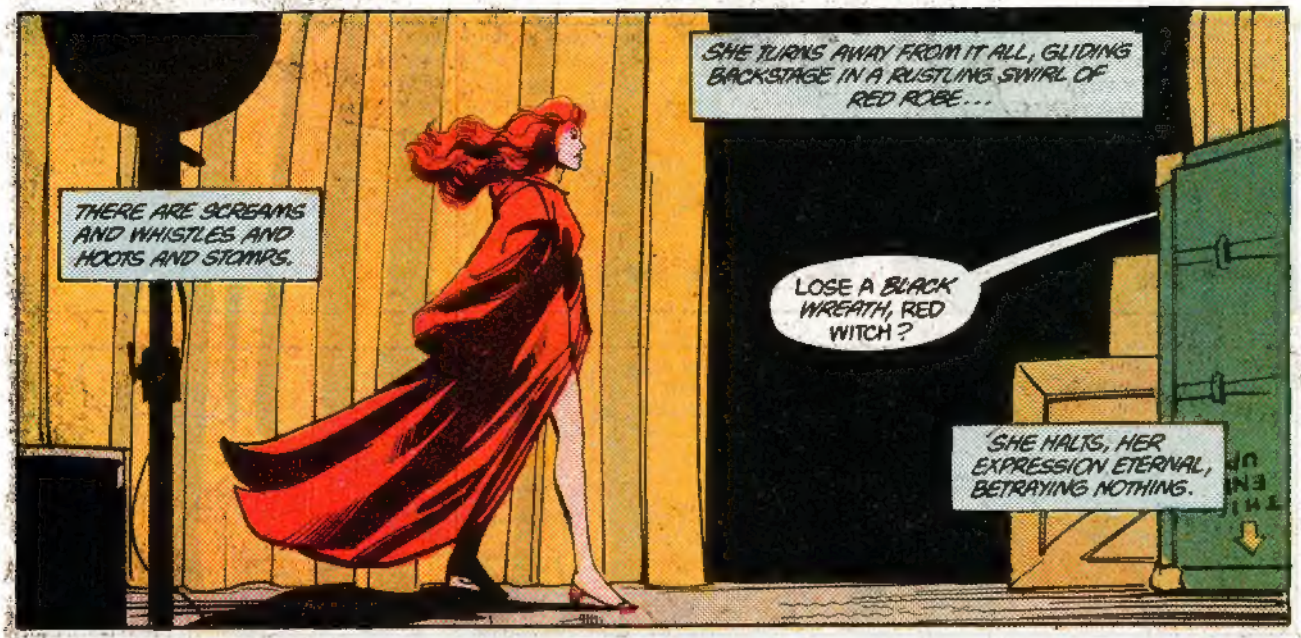

THERE ARE SCREAMS AND WHISTLES AND HOOTS AND STOMPS.
SHE TURNS AWAY FROM IT ALL, GLIDING BACKSTAGE IN A RUSTLING SWIRL OF RED ROBE...
LOSE A BLACK WREATH, RED WITCH?
SHE HALTS, HER EXPRESSION ETERNAL, BETRAYING NOTHING.

YOU'RE CATWOMAN.
THAT'S RIGHT, AND YOU'RE CIRCE.
YES...IT WAS ME AT THE CEMETERY EARLIER TONIGHT...
AND WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE NOW?

I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH YOU KNOW ABOUT ME, CATWOMAN, BUT THE LIVING I ONCE MADE AS A COSMETIC MODEL IS...HARDLY POSSIBLE NOW...
IT WAS TAKEN AWAY BY ROMAN SIONIS... MY FORMER LOVER... WHEN HE WENT MAD AND BECAME BLACK MASK.

BUT WHAT I DO NOW ISN'T MUCH DIFFERENT--ONLY THE PARTS HAVE CHANGED.
SINCE I CAN NO LONGER RELY ON MY FACE, I MAKE MY LIVING WITH THE ONLY THING I HAVE LEFT...

MY BODY.
WHAT ABOUT YOUR BRAIN?
BEHIND THE MASK, CIRCE EITHER SIGHS OR HISSES.
MY BRAIN IS BUSY ROUND THE CLOCK, CATWOMAN...

...THINKING, SCHEMING...
...DREAMING ENDLESS SCENES OF REVENGE.
AND COULD HER EYES BE SEEN, THEY WOULD SHOW FIRE.

--BOTH OPERATING ON THE STANDARD BINARY SYSTEM, BOTH WITH IDENTICAL COMPONENTS AND CHIPS--
--BUT WHILE BOTH WILL GIVE THE SAME ANSWERS AT THE SAME SPEED TO STRICTLY MATHEMATICAL PROBLEMS--
--THEY WILL GIVE DIFFERING "ANSWERS" TO PROBLEMS INVOLVING A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF SPECULATION OR DECISION-MAKING--
--EVEN WHEN FED PRECISELY THE SAME RAW DATA.
GET TO THE POINT, WILLYA?
WELL, AT TIMES MY TWIN COMPUTERS HAVE GIVEN "ANSWERS" WHICH COULD BE SAID TO BE "OPPOSITE"
I STILL DON'T GET IT.
NEITHER DO I, SGT BULLOCK, AND THIS EXTRAORDINARY ANOMALY IS PRECISELY WHY I REFUSED TO RELINQUISH THE COMPUTERS UNTIL MY LIFE WAS DIRECTLY THREATENED.
--BUT ALSO FROM CONTRASTING ATTITUDES OF...OF PHILOSOPHY... OR EVEN MORALITY.
YOU SEE, IT'S ALMOST AS IF ONE OR BOTH OF THE COMPUTERS OPERATE NOT ONLY ON IDENTICAL SYSTEMS OF LOGIC--
I'D EVEN BEGUN THINKING OF THEM AS ANALOGUES OF THE BICAMERAL HUMAN MIND--THE RIGHT BRAIN AND THE LEFT BRAIN
SAY WHAT?
THE EVOLVED HIGHER CONSCIOUSNESS AND THE PRIMITIVE "REPTILIAN" BRAIN.
CLEAR AS MUD

BUT TO THE BATMAN, IT IS CLEAR.
IT SEEMS TWO-FACE DID MORE THAN SCULPTING TO PASS HIS TIME AT ARKHAM--A LOT OF READING AS WELL.
YEAH--AND HE'S GONNA FACE THE 80'S IN UP-TO-DATE STYLE.
DOUBLE BINARY BRAINS TO MATCH THE TWO SIDES OF HIS DOUBLE-HEADED COIN..
OR THE TWO SIDES OF HIS FACE.
AND YOU THINK HE'LL USE THESE COMPUTERS TO DICTATE HIS ACTIONS?
YES--AND WHO KNOWS WHAT CRIMES OR "BENEVOLENT ACTS" THEY'LL IMPEL HIM TO COMMIT
IF ONLY HIS SO-CALLED BENEVOLENT ACTS TRULY WERE BENEVOLENT.
IN THE BEGINNING, GORDON, PERHAPS HE REALLY DID HAVE TWO SIDES, ONE GOOD AND ONE EVIL, BUT HIS EVIL SIDE HAS STEADILY GROWN STRONGER OVER THE YEARS--
--EATING AWAY AT THE GOOD MAN WHO WAS ONCE DISTRICT ATTORNEY HARVEY DENT.
HE'S THE MOST TRAGIC FOE I'VE EVER FACED, GORDON, AND I STILL FEEL AS I ALWAYS HAVE.
SHORT OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT, THE ONLY WAY TO PUT AN END TO TWO-FACE'S EVIL IS TO REACH THE GOOD OF HARVEY DENT TRAPPED INSIDE--AND FREE IT.
POLICE COMMISSIONER GORDON SAYS NOTHING.
HIS EXPRESSION MAKES "GOOD LUCK" REDUNDANT
YOU REALLY THINK WE CAN REACH HIS GOOD SIDE, BATMAN?
NOT LIKELY, ROBIN--
--BUT ANYTHING'S POSSIBLE, AND THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE IS ETERNAL OPPOSITION.

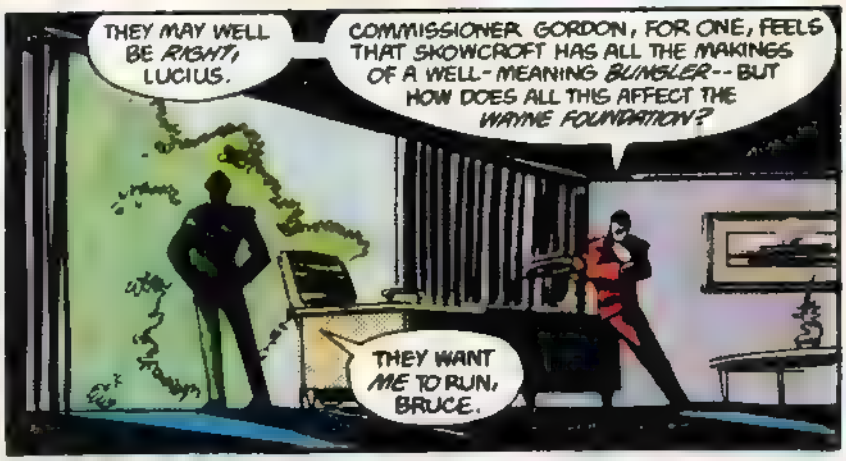
YOU MEAN OPPOSITION BETWEEN HIS TWO SIDES?
AND BETWEEN HIM AND US.
YEAH, A DOUBLE DOUBLE-BIND WHICH ONLY--
WHAT THE--?! OF ALL THE NERVE!
SLEEPING IN OUR BATMOBILE!
BEEEEP
YAWN
FOUND YOUR RED WITCH, BATMAN... RIGHT IN THE HEART OF THE "TWILIGHT ZONE."
YOU SAW CIRCE?
JUST ABOUT ALL OF HER-- EXCEPT WHATEVER'S BEHIND THAT PLASTIC MASK.
NUTS--I WAS HOPING SHE'D LEAP THREE FEET IN THE AIR, HISSIN' AND SCREECHIN' WITH HER FUR UP.
WE'LL DROP YOU OFF AT YOUR PLACE--AND YOU CAN TELL US ABOUT IT ON THE WAY.
ROBIN, YOU'LL HAVE TO SIT IN CATWOMAN'S LAP.
GEE, WHAT A THRILL.
EXACTLY WHERE WAS CIRCE, CATWOMAN?
IN A CHARMING LITTLE HOLE CALLED ECDYSIA, BATMAN--AND THE BLACK WREATH WAS HERS...BUT THEN, YOU ALREADY KNEW THAT.

A FORTNIGHT LATER
NOW THAT I'VE FINALLY MASTERED THESE COMPUTERS, TWO-FACE, AND PROGRAMMED INFO ON EVERY POSSIBLE TARGET--
--MEANING ALL THOSE CONNECTED TO THE NUMBER "TWO" OR "DOUBLE"--
--IT'S TIME TO SEE WHAT OUR BINARY BRAINS COME UP WITH...
YOU SPECIFIED THAT THE ONLY ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION TO THE "PROBLEM" IS THE SWIFT ACQUISITION OF $200,000?
YEP--AND HERE COME THE "ANSWERS."
HMMM... THIS IS INTERESTING. "RIGHTIE" SUGGESTS A PYRAMID INVESTMENT SCHEME IN DOUBLE-ISSUE BONDS--KINDA CLASSY.
AND THE OTHER COMPUTER?
AHHH.. "LEFTIE" HERE IS BRUTALLY DIRECT, BOSS.
IT SAYS: "ROB THE TWIN TOWERS BANK ON ANY SECOND FRIDAY NIGHT OF THE MONTH."
ALL RIGHT, NOW WE'LL DECIDE WHICH BRAIN WE LISTEN TO...
PUP
UNMARKED SIDE FOR "RIGHTIE"--SCARRED SIDE FOR "LEFTIE."
FINALLY--THE SCARRED SIDE.
SO IT'S THE BANK
DOES THE COMPUTER HAVE ANY BRIGHT IDEAS ON HOW WE PULL IT OFF?

YEAH--IT SAYS "USE ME TO TAP INTO BANK'S COMPUTER."
CAN YOU DO IT?
IN TIME, YEAH--I'M GETTIN' TO BE QUITE THE HACKER, BOSS...
.. BUT I ONLY PROMISE ACCESS--NO TAMPERIN' WITHOUT SETTIN' OFF ALERTS.
AND, AT HALF PAST TWO THE NEXT AFTERNOON:
GOT IT, BOSS!
LEFTIE SAYS: "POINT OF VULNERABILITY: SECURITY INSECURE." THE BANK USED THE SAFETITE SECURITY AGENCY. TOTAL OF NINE NIGHT GUARDS OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS...
MOST RECENT ONE, GEORGE MARSH, NOW DECEASED.
SO HE'S THE KEY, BOSS--AND WE'RE ALMOST HOME FREE! BUT YOU REALIZE...ONCE WE PULL THIS HEIST, THE BATMAN WILL BE AFTER US...
OF COURSE HE WILL! THIS IS GOTHAM, ISN'T IT?
THEN SHOULDN'T WE MAYBE TAKE HIM INTO ACCOUNT UP FRONT?
WHO DO YOU THINK I AM--THE RIDDLER? THIS IS NO GAME I PLAY!
THIS IS OBSESSION!
HE WHIRLS, CROSSING FROM ONE SIDE OF THE ROOM TO THE OTHER.
I DO WHAT I DO BECAUSE OF WHAT FATE HAS MADE ME--NOT BECAUSE I ENJOY "MATCHING WITS" WITH THE BATMAN!
NOR DO I PARTICULARLY CARE TO MAKE HIS LIFE HELL--AS THE JOKER DOES!
FATE HAS CURSED ME WITH DUALITY--
--AND I DECIDED LONG AGO THAT IT IS MY UGLY, EVIL SIDE WHICH DOMINATES! SIMILARLY, BATMAN'S FATE-GIVEN DESTINY IS TO OPPOSE EVIL AND UGLINESS.
I ACT AND HE REACTS!
LET HIM COME!
I NEVER RUN!!

O-OKAY, BOSS... IF THAT'S THE WAY YOU WANT IT
SO AFTER I GET THE DOPE ON THIS DEAD MARSH GUY, ANYTHING ELSE?
YES! AND FOR ONCE, IT'S JUST ONE THING...
GO TO A VIDEO STORE AND SEE IF COCTEAU'S "BEAUTY AND THE BEAST" IS AVAILABLE ON CASSETTE OR LASERDISC.
ACROSS TOWN:
BEFORE WE GET TO YOUR BUSINESS, BRUCE, THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT TO SAY..
CERTAINLY, LUCIUS--FIRE AWAY.
VERY WELL...
WAYNE

IT IS THE THOROUGHLY CONSIDERED OPINION OF A GROUP OF PROMINENT GOTHAM BUSINESSMEN AND CIVIC LEADERS THAT ACTING MAYOR SKOWCROFT, WHILE FAR FROM BEING A CROOK, OR EVEN MISGUIDED--
--IS NEVERTHELESS UNSUITABLE MATERIAL FOR THE NEXT FULLY ELECTED MAYOR.


THEY MAY WELL BE RIGHT, LUCIUS.
COMMISSIONER GORDON, FOR ONE, FEELS THAT SKOWCROFT HAS ALL THE MAKINGS OF A WELL-MEANING BUMBLER--BUT HOW DOES ALL THIS AFFECT THE WAYNE FOUNDATION?
THEY WANT ME TO RUN, BRUCE.

I...SEE... AND YOU DO HAVE ALL THE CREDENTIALS... EXEMPLARY RECORD WITH THE FOUNDATION HERE... PROVEN ADMINISTRATOR.. INVOLVED IN CIVIC AND CHARITY FUNCTIONS... PERSONABLE AND ARTICULATE...
NO DOUBT YOU'D PULL THE BLACK AND OTHER MINORITY VOTES... AND WITH POWERFUL BACKING AND POLITICAL CONNECTIONS--
EXACTLY, BRUCE.
I HAVEN'T GIVEN MY ANSWER YET, BUT I WANT YOU TO KNOW I AM CONSIDERING IT.
IT'S APPRECIATED, LUCIUS, AND I CAN'T THINK OF A SINGLE REASON TO ADVISE AGAINST IT, OTHER THAN SELFISHLY NOT WANTING TO LOSE A GOOD MAN.
BUT IF YOU DECIDE TO GO FOR IT, I'LL BE BEHIND YOU ALL THE WAY.
TH-THANKS, BRUCE. ;KOFF;
NOW-- WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU? SOMETHING ABOUT COMPUTERS, YOU SAID...?
NIGHT: AND THE SIGNAL IS ANSWERED...
I'M RIGHT HERE.
I'VE BEEN WORKING ON THE TWO-FACE PROBLEM ON MY OWN.
HUH? NO BATMAN? BUT I FIGURED HE'S BEEN WITH YOU/ THE PAST TWO WEEKS, CAT-LADY...
A FRIEND GAVE ME ACCESS TO A COMPUTER SIMILAR TO TWO-FACE'S TWIN BINARY BRAINS-- AND IT'S COME UP WITH A LIST OF LIKELY TARGETS.
UH-UH-- I THOUGHT HE WAS WITH YOU, ROBIN.

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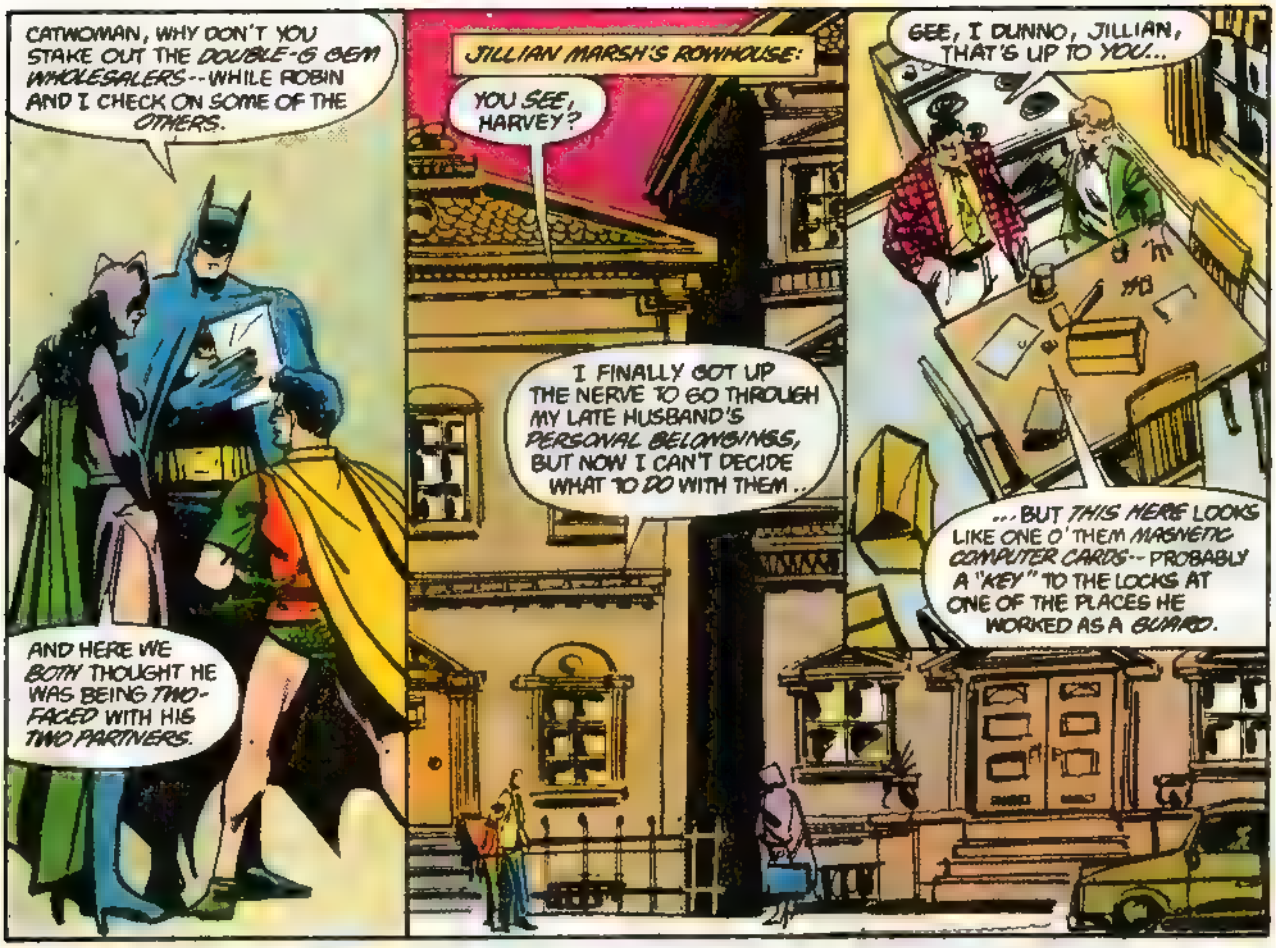
CATWOMAN, WHY DON'T YOU STAKE OUT THE DOUBLE-G GEM WHOLESALERS--WHILE ROBIN AND I CHECK ON SOME OF THE OTHERS.
AND HERE WE BOTH THOUGHT HE WAS BEING TWO-FACED WITH HIS TWO PARTNERS.
JILLIAN MARSH'S ROWHOUSE:
YOU SEE, HARVEY?
I FINALLY GOT UP THE NERVE TO GO THROUGH MY LATE HUSBAND'S PERSONAL BELONGINGS, BUT NOW I CAN'T DECIDE WHAT TO DO WITH THEM..
GEE, I DUNNO, JILLIAN, THAT'S UP TO YOU...
...BUT THIS HERE LOOKS LIKE ONE O' THEM MAGNETIC COMPUTER CARDS--PROBABLY A "KEY" TO THE LOCKS AT ONE OF THE PLACES HE WORKED AS A GUARD.

BETTER GIVE IT BACK TO THE SECURITY AGENCY.
BUT RIGHT NOW WE GOTTA HURRY, OR WE'LL MISS THE DOUBLE-FEATURE AT THE REGENCY...

A HALF-HOUR LATER:
KEEESH

YESSSS...
MARSH WAS THE KEY.

THEN YOU'LL DO IT FOR ME, RICO?
ECDYSIA

YOU CAN GET THE WORD TO HIM?
SURE, WITCHIE-BABE--I'LL TELL HIS BOYS MYSELF.
NOW WHAT ARE YA DOIN' AFTER WORK TONIGHT?

AND THREE NIGHTS LATER, ON THE SECOND FRIDAY OF THE MONTH...
DEET

WORKED LIKE A CHARM, TWO-FACE...
...AND I'M TELLIN' YOU--THAT "LEFTIE" SURE AIN'T NO DUMMY.

EH--?! HOW DID YOU GET IN H--
FREEZE!!
THE ALARM--!

WOKT
TEK
DRIIINGGG

JUST FOR THAT, GRAMPS-- SAY HELLO TO MARSH!
CHUD TUD THUD
NOW HURRY, YOU TWO-- BLOW THE SAFE!!
THE DASHBOARD ALARM, BATMAN-- BEING RELAYED FROM THE TWIN TOWERS BANK!
CHECK, ROBIN-- IT WASN'T NEXT ON OUR LIST, BUT IT'S A QUICK DETOUR!
AND MINUTES LATER...
WE GOT THE CASH, TWO-FACE!
THEN LET'S MOVE!
IT WON'T BE LONG BEFORE THAT ALARM BRINGS--
KRRRRRRRRR
BA-DUMMMM

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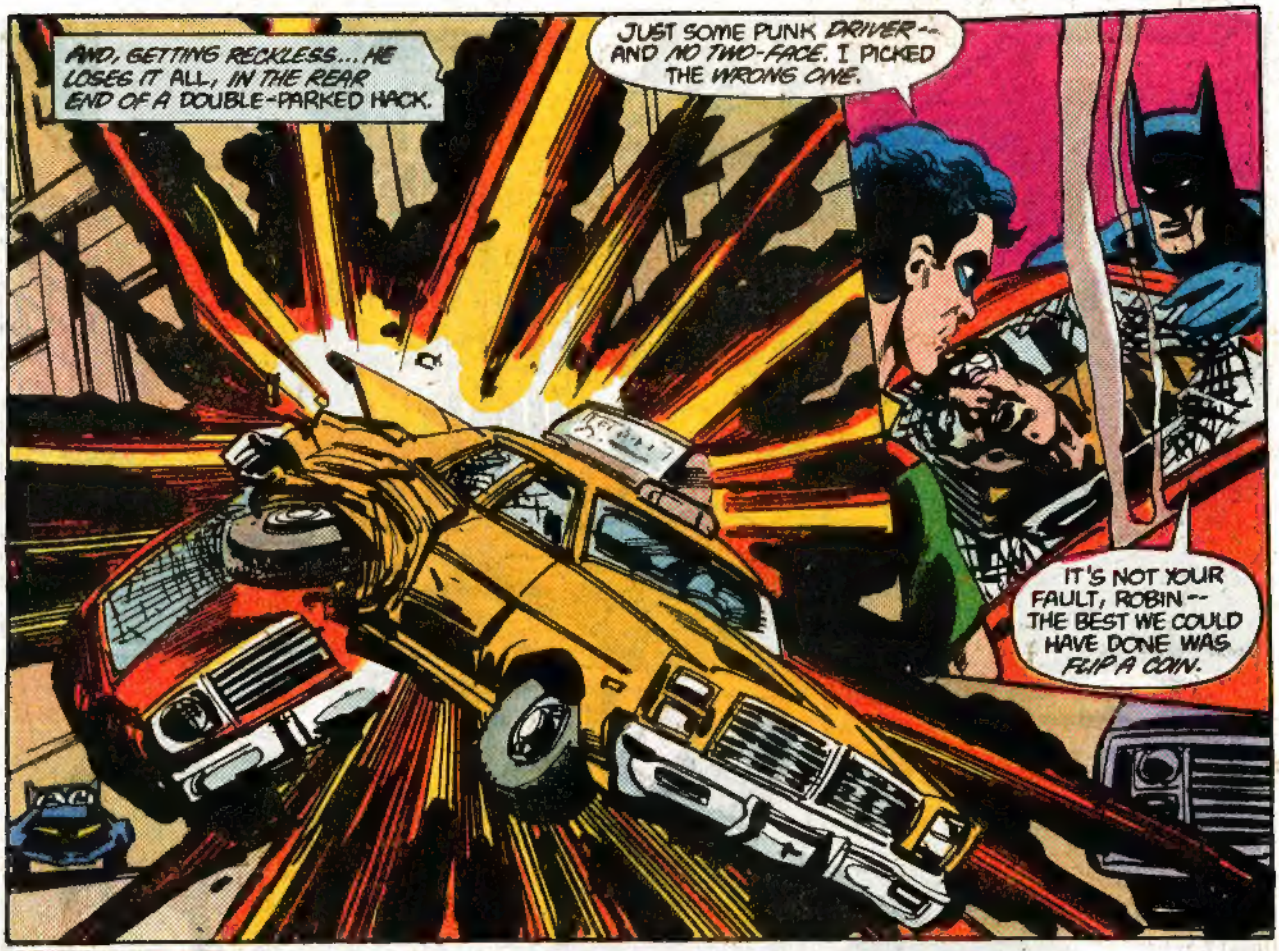
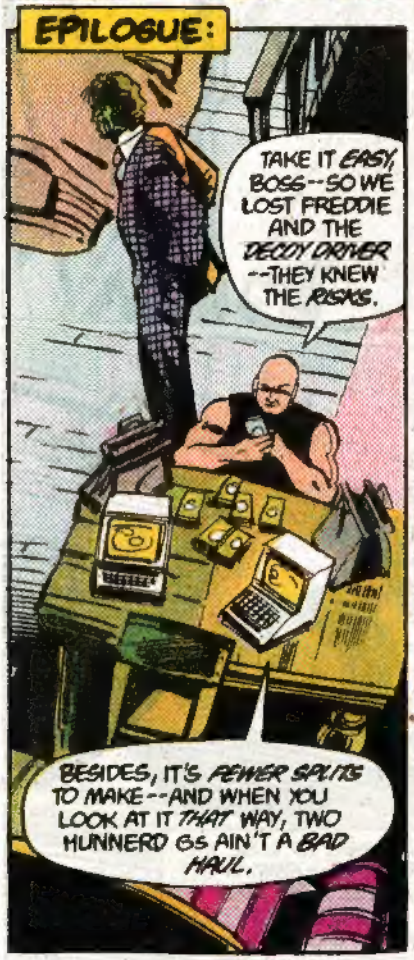
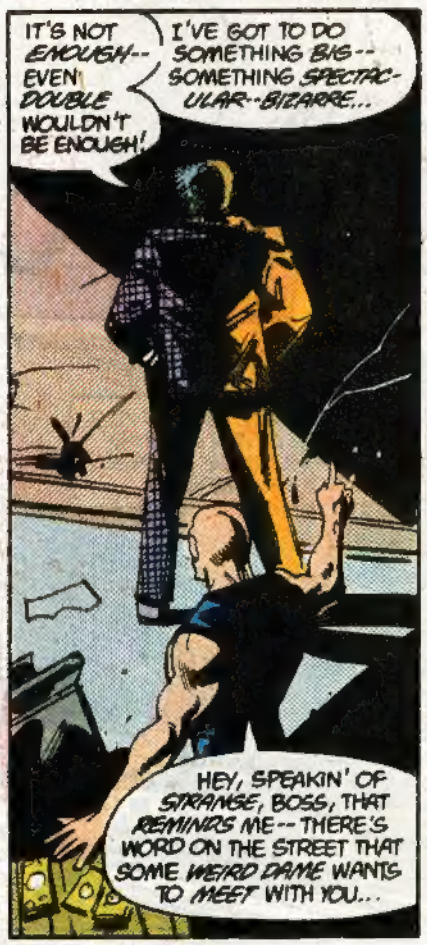
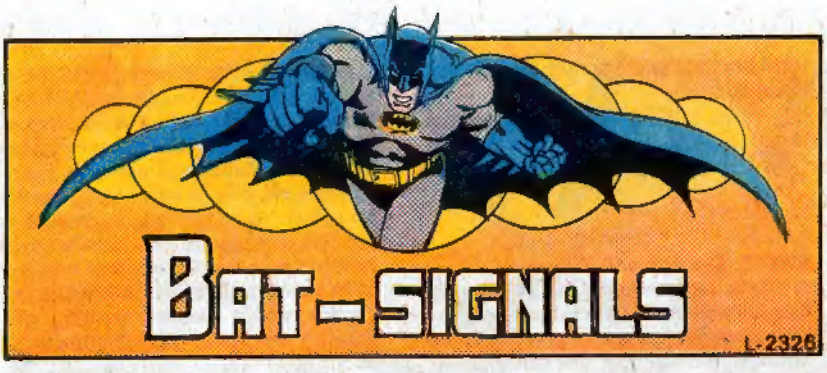
BUT OUTSIDE:
TWO IDENTICAL GETAWAY CARS--SAME MAKE, MODEL, AND COLOR!
THE BATMOBILE CAN CATCH ONE OF THEM--BUT WHICH ONE?
OFF THE TOP OF MY HEAD, BATMAN, I'D GUESS--
--THE LEFT ONE.
YOU'VE GOT IT, ROBIN!
IT TAKES THREE BLOCKS FOR THE DRIVER OF THE GETAWAY CAR TO REALIZE THE BATMOBILE CANNOT BE OUTPACED.
HE'LL HAVE TO LOSE HIS PURSUERS--AND TO DO SO, HE'LL HAVE TO GET RECKLESS...


AND, GETTING RECKLESS... HE LOSES IT ALL, IN THE REAR END OF A DOUBLE-PARKED HACK.
JUST SOME PUNK DRIVER -- AND NO TWO-FACE. I PICKED THE WRONG ONE.
IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT, ROBIN -- THE BEST WE COULD HAVE DONE WAS FLIP A COIN.


EPILOGUE:
TAKE IT EASY, BOSS -- SO WE LOST FREDDIE AND THE DECOY DRIVER -- THEY KNEW THE RISKS.
BESIDES, IT'S FEWER SPLITS TO MAKE -- AND WHEN YOU LOOK AT IT THAT WAY, TWO HUNNERD Gs AIN'T A BAD HAUL.


IT'S NOT ENOUGH -- EVEN DOUBLE WOULDN'T BE ENOUGH!
I'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING BIG -- SOMETHING SPECTACULAR -- BIZARRE...
HEY, SPEAKIN' OF STRANGE, BOSS, THAT REMINDS ME -- THERE'S WORD ON THE STREET THAT SOME WEIRD DAME WANTS TO MEET WITH YOU...

SAYS SHE'S A WITCH NAMED CIRCE -- AND CLAIMS SHE'S GOT JUST WHAT YOU NEED..
YEAH? AND WHAT'S THAT?
WELL, THE WAY SHE PUTS IT...
"A NEW FACE."
CONTINUED IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF DETECTIVE COMICS # 564 (ON SALE IN TWO WEEKS): DOUBLE CROSSES!



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Before we begin this month, we need to clarify something. In the letters page for BATMAN #393, we told you that we were in error by allowing Batman to take Catwoman to the Batcave blindfolded, since as of 'TEC #526, she knew Batman was Bruce Wayne. Well, we were wrong. As soon as the comic hit print, the error became apparent and we want to state now and for the record, Catwoman does not know Batman is Bruce Wayne. Never has and maybe never will. Forget what we've said in the past and what was done by other writers; this is the law of the land. Sorry for the confusion, and now, on with the mail!

*****

Dear Len,

I didn't like the cover of BATMAN #393, then I looked down and saw that it wasn't drawn by Tom Mandrake, but by somebody I had never heard of, Paul Gulacy. I was tempted to not buy it, but I remembered the old saying "don't judge a book by its cover," so I went ahead and bought it. Was I ever surprised when I got home and opened it up! Gulacy penciled a stunning splash page and captured the mood of the story perfectly.

Speaking of the story, it was another Doug Moench masterpiece. Doug is the best Batman writer I have seen in a long time!

By the way, has Paul Gulacy ever done any artwork at DC before?

Now that I look at it again, I really like that cover!

Darren Johnson
204 Cottonwood Court
Niceville, FL 32578

Paul Gulacy has been a master storyteller for the past decade and more. His work has been seen at virtually every comics company around, but this is his first effort at DC in too long a time. He is best known, perhaps, for his collaboration with Doug on **Master of Kung Fu** *at Marvel during the middle 1970s. He and Doug had so much fun doing this two-parter that they have recently sold a new series to DC which is already in the works.*

*****

Dear Len and Bob,

For the past few months I've felt that BATMAN had lost some of its intensity. Maybe Doug was just getting a second wind, because #393 was simply spectacular!

The Dark Knight, so long the guardian of Gotham, segued into international espionage and intrigue with surprising ease. I like to think that national boundaries have no meaning for Batman, that he is motivated by a sense of justice rather than patriotism (the "last refuge of a scoundrel" according to Samuel Johnson). Judging from the development of the "Dark Rider," I would guess that Doug thinks so as well. The story flowed as smoothly and as mysteriously as any 007 movie. Batman's status as an independent agent (despite the CIA's request) only enhanced the excitement. No matter whose interests may be served by the Batman's actions, one of the things I like best about him is that he always acts on his own.

The art was the best I have seen since Don Newton left us. The cover was inspired (I love a BATMAN cover that screams silence) and Gulacy handled the darkness of the Batman beautifully. The Batman's entry into the warehouse on page five is among the best bat-art I have ever seen.

I look forward to the conclusion of this conflict next month and I hope you can persuade Paul Gulacy to favor us with his art again in the future. Meanwhile, chain Mr. Moench to his typewriter. He's the tops!

Mic McConnell
1910 Le Suer Road
Richmond, VA 23229

*****

Dear Len and Bob,

It seemed like ages between when I first heard of the reuniting of Moench and Gulacy on a mainstream comic and when I finally bought BATMAN #393, but, gentlemen, it was worth the wait.

The cover was incredible. The placement of the knives makes us feel this is a snapshot more than an illustration and the coloring (who?) is exquisite.

Then the insides. I'm glad we didn't get page after page of introduction. Doug brought us almost instantly into the thick of things, and things never slowed down. This James Bond-style treatment of Batman is not a great idea over an extended period of time, but as a two-issue special it's wonderful. Batman is one character that can crossover into several genres without losing face and I wouldn't object to this type of experimentation every once in a while.

The art, of course, was excellent, since Paul Gulacy did it. I loved the little details he brought in, like the Dark Rider's drug habit and his henchman's salute on page seven; the great fight scenes and his knack for drawing characters that are recognizable from panel to panel.

All in all a terrific first part and I eagerly await the conclusion.

John K. Austin
West 1433 9th #305
Spokane, WA 99204

The covers are colored by Anthony Tollin every month and he appreciates the fact that you've noticed the meticulous attention he gives each one. As for Paul's wonderful art, a lot of the credit has to be given to Doug, who inspires the best in people.

*****

Dear Len and Bob,

The Batman in the Soviet Union—I love it! It's great to see the Darknight Detective getting into some serious espionage. I feel that Batman is the best that he has ever been and what better time could there be for you to bring him to Toronto for a visit. What an amazing battle could take place with a dangerous villain atop the CN Tower—the world's tallest freestanding structure! Please consider this for we poor Canadians who have to pay 95¢ to read BATMAN!

John M. Gallagher
1859 Pattinson Cres.
Mississauga, Ohtario L5J 1H6
Canada

*****

Dear Troops,

Looking at BATMAN #393 was almost like looking at a collection of stills from a motion picture. I once heard someone make the comparison of Batman to Ian Fleming's James Bond, maybe you heard that comparison also. Doug, you must have gone through your collection of Robert Ludlum novels for this one. We're only halfway through it, so the wrap-up must be really a banger. I think Paul Gulacy's art is dynamite, but I only recall one other piece of work by him, a Black Widow story that he did for Marvel's *Bizarre Adventures*. That story looked great and it was in black and white; this is an out-and-out knockout.

If he isn't dead by the end of this adventure, I would love to see a return bout with the Dark Rider. He hasn't done too much yet except lead Batman on a big chase and stab one of his own men in the back, yet there is something about

him that seems to say "Big Villain" in neon. I really am curious as to what those pills he pops are for. My guess is that they are to help him cope with some form of radiation poisoning, acquired from some mission in the US, which would explain his hatred of the States. But, like I said, I hope that he has a return engagement in these pages. I hope Katia returns also; like Catwoman, she's strong-willed, good in a fight, and beautiful as all get-out. So what if she uses firearms, I'm sure I could forgive a girl for liking the Cubs if I really loved her.

By the way, guys, that statue of the Dark Rider looks kind of familiar. You all didn't happen to see the original 1942 Jacques Tourneur version of *The Cat People*, did you?

Willie Holmes
8453 South Saginaw
Chicago, IL 60617

Both Doug and Paul are cinema buffs, so the imagery is more than coincidental.

*****

Dear Doug and Paul,

In regards to BATMAN #393, all I can say is hooray!

This is the Batman I love to see. This element of intrigue and espionage is his. It's also nice to see that although he is the "world's greatest detective" that even he can be surprised by the twists, turns, and complexity of international politics and configurations. Please, work him in this element more often.

You would think that someone of his stature, reputation, and devotion to responsibilities and duties would be called upon to help others more often. Why, then, does it seem that the majority of his talent is spent in Gotham?

When delving into the man inside of the Batman, I would think that part of the realm of responsibility, to suppress the spread of world crime, would be to be on alert in other areas.

Although, this may be too broad for him. Perhaps he needs to be confined to smaller circles of influence to be effective. But then again, you tried it in this story and it worked so well.

Also, it occurs to me that the greatest gift you could give a teacher would be one of his students following in his footsteps to become a teacher himself. Kind of a living legacy. Part of the recognition of one's talents and abilities, along with wanting to refine and condition them, I think, would be the acceptance of the fact that in order for them to be carried on that they will have to be taught to someone younger. And as effective or as good as you were, hopefully they will be better.

True, this is what occurred with Nightwing and Robin, but why stop there? He could also teach others without being put in the role of "superhero and sidekick."

By the way, if this in any way sounds like I am challenging you ... well ... it's because I am.

Jonathan R. Downing
5206 Tiffin Avenue
Castalia, OH 44824

*****

Messrs. Moench and Gulacy,

I have long thought the Batman an excellent character. He is a man of controlled vengeance with a personal drive stronger than almost any other comic book character. Sometimes criticized as being too serious, Batman reminds me of a certain martial arts expert I so very much miss. But, few stories have complemented this intense man as much as possible. BATMAN #393 was one of those stories.

Both the writing and the art were spectacular. No lie, some of the best storytelling I've ever seen lies between the glossy covers of BATMAN #393. The Batman came across the true creature of the night I have always perceived him as.

And now the bad news. This magic will last only one more issue. Why? I remember reading the dialogue in the back of *Six from Sirius* #4 in which Mr. Gulacy expressed his dislikes of the pressures of a monthly mag, but please stay! The two of you mesh so perfectly. Mr. Moench may very well be one of the best writers in the business, but he is twice as effective with Mr. Gulacy illustrating the stories.

John Yancura
Fresno, CA

As we stated earlier, their collaboration on BATMAN is over, but they have reteamed to do a new series for us and that's the next best thing. What is it? More science fiction than espionage, how's that for a clue?

*****

Dear Bob,

I'd like to give my comments on BATMAN #393. First of all the artwork by Paul Gulacy: his atmospheric style fit perfectly with the plot line (and can that guy draw faces or what?).

Now to the story. I enjoy comics that are half and half. What I mean by that is half comic world, half real life. Here we have the Batman fighting very realistic problems. Murder, smuggling, secret agents, and most of all, nuclear war and terrorism. Ya know, to jump the topic a bit, sometimes after I watch worldwide news I really wish instead of reality in the comics, I wish just for a while that comics would become reality. Br- couldn't we "really" use a Batman ri- about now!

Eric James Baich
705)10149 Saskatchewan Drive
Edmonton, Alberta T6E 6B6
Canada

*****

COMING ATTRACTIONS

In just two weeks, the terror of Two-Face continues in DETECTIVE COMICS, courtesy of Doug, Gene Colan, and Bob Smith. Plus Green Arrow by Joey Cavalieri, Jerome Moore, and Dell Barras.

Elsewhere, this month we present BLUE BEETLE #2, where BB tackles Firefist as his first adventure comes to a conclusion. Len and Paris Cullins have knocked themselves out on this one. And don't forget that Batman is back in the JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA these days, whipping the new team into shape. And in WHO'S WHO #17, we present the lowdown on Nightwing, Onyx, the Outsiders, Omac, Nocturna, and Night-Slayer. And have you been noticing Robin's guest appearance in NEW TEEN TITANS these last few months? Finally, DARK KNIGHT TRIUMPHANT continues Frank Miller's future history of the Caped Crusader as we see the new Robin swing into action! You'll love her.

And what about BATMAN #400? More next month, but we'll leave you with a few names. Bill Sienkiewicz. George Pérez. David Mazzuchelli. Arthur Adams. Berni Wrightson. Interested?

Until next time, enjoy the spring, write, and keep smiling!

—Bob Greenberger